

[then Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Southern Command] told you, the millions of tons of food and supplies that U.S. forces flew in and gave out saved countless lives and helped to literally rebuild entire regions from the ground up.

When Slobodan Milosevic unleashed a wave of terror in Kosovo last year, America's military was ready. We had soldiers in neighboring countries preventing a wider war and airlifting tons of food and supplies to save thousands of Kosovar refugees. We had sailors and marines on ships and submarines in the Adriatic, and naval aviators flying into those dangerous Balkans skies. And we had airmen engaging in the most precise campaign in the history of air power. They conducted the vast majority of those 38,000 NATO sorties. They took to the skies for 78 days with only two planes lost and not a single combat casualty. And while that record was not achieved without stress on certain assets, that is a historic achievement of which our forces and the American people should be enormously proud.

Indeed, the true measure of America's military is the job they do every day. In short, America needs to know that the U.S. Armed Forces are the best trained, best educated, best led, most respected and finest fighting force the world has ever seen.

So in closing, I want to recite a page from America's past that I believe points the way to ensuring our military strength in the future. Half a century ago, this nation stood at the hinge of history, an unprecedented time of both promise and peril. There was the promise, our victory in the Second World War. But there was also the peril, a dawning Cold War. And America's very survival demanded that we think anew and act anew. And so to navigate the shoals of the century that lay ahead, Arthur Vandenberg, a Republican Senator from Michigan, joined with Harry Truman, a Democratic President from Missouri, and the nation came together around a common foreign and defense policy to defend freedom and to create a Marshall Plan and an alliance called NATO that would eventually win the Cold War.

Today, in the long wake of our triumph in that long struggle, America again stands at the hinge of history. Again there is the promise, of the world's sole economic and military superpower. Again there is the peril, the new threats of this new century. And to chart the nation's course in our time, William Cohen, a Republican Senator from Maine, joined with Bill Clinton, a Democratic President from Arkansas, to help restore a spirit of bi-partisanship to defense policy and to ensure that when it comes to our men and women in uniform, politics does indeed stop at the water's edge.

Ladies and gentlemen, in recent years we have recognized that truth. We have worked with Congress to support and strengthen our military. We have upheld our sacred pledge to care for America's sons and daughters who wear this nation's uniform. That is the message I wanted to bring to you today. That is the message I hope you carry back to your communities and the country. Thank you very much.

## HONORING THE GRAND OLE OPRY IN NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE ON THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

### HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 5, 2000

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, today I honor a sacred historic institution, the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee, on the occasion of its 75th Anniversary as the longest continuously running live radio show in the world. The Opry and its colorful cast of characters are known and loved by individuals across the globe.

As a native Nashvillian, born and reared in Music City USA, I truly appreciate the significance of country music and its influence on so many people. Country music and its cousins, bluegrass, folk, gospel, blues and rockabilly, truly have captured the heart and soul of our great nation, offering songs that spring from the fabric of America. Country lyrics espouse our history, our faith in God, our love of family, and our appreciation for the value of freedom and hard work. With these melodies and themes, country music appeals to listeners of all ages and from all walks of life.

To honor and highlight the significance of country music, in 1990, I sponsored and passed legislation designating October as Country Music Month. Now Country Music Month and Country Music Week are nationally recognized events each year, celebrated by millions of individuals.

The Opry has inspired a country music fan fair phenomenon; been the focus of a theme park, hotel complex, television networks, magazines, and movies; infused the tourism industry in Tennessee; and given us an incredible amount of memorable music. Yet, the Opry's beginnings were humble.

In 1925, the "solemn old judge" George D. Hay moved from Chicago's WLS Barn Dance to Nashville, where he began broadcasting and hosting the show that would later become the Grand Ole Opry. Hay eventually would coin the phrase, "Grand Ole Opry" about the program, instantly giving it a name that would endure forever. With WSM's strong 100,000-watt clear channel signal, the Opry could be heard for hundreds of miles across the United States by thousands of people. As the show brought performers of traditional music to the stage, a new genre of music was officially born—country music.

Those early 1920s Opry performers included mainly instrumental talents such as banjo player Uncle Dave Macon and harmonica player Deford Bailey. In the 1930s and 40s, vocalists such as the "King of Country Music" Roy Acuff, Ernest Tubb, Hank Williams, and Bill Monroe all took the stage, as did comedienne Minnie Pearl.

As the years passed, the talent pool grew and the NBC Network picked up the show. Such big names as Patsy Cline, Flatt and Scruggs, Hank Snow, Hawkshaw Hawkins, Jim Reeves, Red Foley, Marty Robbins, Martha Carson, Kitty Wells, Johnny Wright, Bill Anderson, Connie Smith, Dolly Parton, Porter Wagoner, Garth Brooks, Pam Tillis, Trisha

Yearwood, and Alison Krauss all have called the Opry stage home. These artists represent just a fraction of the bright and talented performers to grace the stage since its inception, whether at the War Memorial Auditorium, the Ryman Auditorium, or the Grand Ole Opry House of today.

My family has enjoyed an ongoing relationship with the Grand Ole Opry over the years. In fact my father, Governor Frank Clement, enjoyed strong friendships with many Opry members, often enlisting their talents for political rallies across the state. In addition, Governor Clement traveled to Washington and testified on behalf of country music when its lyrics were under fire by Congress in the 1950s.

Like any sacred institution, the Opry has endured sorrow, grief, and loss. It has faced adversity and strain. There have been joyous times and laughter. But the Opry has endured throughout each season. In the 1980s, George Jones touched our hearts as he sang, "Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes" about the legacy of country music and its legendary artists. Jones singled out performers such as Lefty Frizzell, Merle Haggard, Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Willie Nelson, and Roy Acuff in the tune. He also mentioned the Opry in the song lyrics, inspiring a new generation of country artists to carry the torch. I'd particularly like to recognize the contributions of Ricky Skaggs, Marty Stuart, and WSM announcer Eddie Stubbs for promoting the cause of traditional music and educating the next generation about our rich heritage in this new millennium.

Throughout the years the Opry and its cast of performers, announcers, advertisers, and musicians have inspired and entertained us each Friday and Saturday night. For these valued contributions and cherished memories we are forever grateful to the Opry and those who have called it "home." We salute the Grand Ole Opry for 75 wonderful years and offer our sincerest wishes for continuous success in the years to come.

Thank you and God bless you.

## HONORING OLYMPIC GOLD MEDAL WINNER STACY DRAGILA

### HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 5, 2000

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize a native of my congressional district who has brought glory and honor to herself, her family, and her fellow Americans. I wish to congratulate Stacy Dragila on recently winning the gold medal in the first-ever Olympic Women's Pole Vault Competition.

Dragila grew up in Auburn, California, where she competed in goat roping as a child. As a heptathlete during her years on Placer High School's track and field team, she had little idea that she would one day stand atop the Olympic medals podium as a pole vault champion. You see, when she was in high school, the pole vault was an event in which only male competitors took part.

As the women's pole vault has finally taken root in the United States, Stacy has quickly